

Miss Nance O'Neil Stars in Spanish Drama of the Heart

"The Passion Flower" Throbbing Tale of Tragic Interest Situated in Old Castile, Rushing to Astounding Climax.

Richard G. Herndon presented at the Shubert-Belasco last night Miss Nance O'Neil, in "The Passion Flower" (La Malquerida), by Jacinto Benavente, translated by John Garrett Underhill and staged by Alfred Hickman.

THE CAST.
Raimunda Miss Nance O'Neil
Acacia Miss Annette Westbay
Donna Isabel Miss Clara T. Bracey
Miguel Miss Alice Wise
Pablo Miss Rider Davies
Bernabe Miss Lillian Lane
Juliana Miss Maud Durand
Esteban Alfred Hickman
Tio Eusebio Edwin Beryl
Rubio Harold Hartel
Norbert H. H. McCollum
Norbert J. Harper Macaulay

Had Aeschylus considered this theme, Raimunda would have been an immortal goddess, Esteban one of the immortal gods, and Acacia a wood nymph. Or, at the least, all would have been royal, battling vainly against the will of the dwellers upon Mt. Olympus.

But as it was Jacinto Benavente, living in this twentieth century, who considered the kingdom of the human heart, the scene is laid in and about a village in Castile, within sight almost of Toledo. There dwell Raimunda, a proud daughter of the people; Esteban, her second husband, and Acacia, Esteban's stepdaughter.

Austere is the country of the Castilian plateau, but not more so than the heart of the people living beneath its sun. Slumbering always is rebellion against organized society, the desire for freedom, the willingness of each man to take the law into his own hand. Therefore, the vendetta spirit blazes forth from Tio Eusebio's father's heart when his son, Faustino, dies with a bullet in his back ere he can wed the fair Acacia.

The finger of suspicion points to Norbert, a former suitor. Gossipy tongues cause a court hearing and Norbert produces his alibi. He could

not have killed Faustino. But who did? Tio Eusebio's heart is torn with grief. He seeks for confirmation of his suspicions. Faustino's brothers, even to the little fellow of twelve, nurse thoughts of vengeance. The village is a smoldering fire, needing but a wandering breeze to fan it into flames.

So for two acts does Benavente laboriously prepare his background, Spanish customs, Spanish scenery, Spanish men and Spanish women. But when the denouement comes in that third act, with all the suddenness of a summer thunder shower, it might as well have come amid classical Greek scenes to those walking with the gods.

Something must come of all these doubts, these suspicions. Why was not Acacia examined by the magistrate? Why was she not asked what she knew of the untimely death of her lover, Faustino? Did Norbert really go away far from the scene of the slaying? Why did Rubio, Esteban's servant, spend so much money in the wine shops? And what did he hint at when intoxicated? And why did Esteban buffet him and drive him forth into the air, stilling his tongue before the gossips? And then came the song, "La Malquerida," to be sung and bantered about the village.

Thus reigns this awful tumult in the mother's heart of Raimunda. She grieves for Faustino's mother, for his father. She mourns for the suspected Norbert. Over and over and over again she ponders on the crime, seeking a solution. And ever before her blinded eyes is the ever-present tragedy of Esteban, her husband, and Acacia, her daughter.

But suddenly Raimunda awakes. She cannot believe her own ears, her own eyes. That this Acacia should harbor such awful hate for Esteban is overwhelming. Raimunda demands that her daughter go to Esteban, then and there, and call him "father."

Raimunda has heard Esteban's painful confession of his weakness. She has pardoned him, balancing his good points with the bad, trying in her own heart to find palliation. She would now drive the devil of hate from Acacia's heart.

And so comes the tragic ending of this powerful drama. There before her mother's eyes does Acacia prove herself "La Malquerida," the "passion flower" of the village song, as she calls "Esteban," "Esteban," and gives him her lips and her passionate em-

brace. Then, in a frenzy, does Raimunda's pride collapse. She rages. She calls in the witnesses. And as she raves Esteban's shot searches out her heart and her end comes slowly, mercifully. In life a loving woman betrayed by husband and daughter, in death her last words are for compassion.

Miss Nance O'Neil scores a distinct triumph in "The Passion Flower." Even in the earlier scenes, where repression counts for so much in forming the mosaic pattern of this bitter drama, she dominates the action. She is never light-hearted. There is always a serious note in her voice. And in the wild passion of that final scene, she is glorious.

Miss O'Neil receives high class support in particular from Alfred Hickman, as Esteban; Miss Annette Westbay, as Acacia; Miss Maud Durand, as the talkative servant, Juliana, and Harold Hartel, as the murderous Rubio.

SPRITELY BURLETTAS ENTERTAIN AT GAYETY

A typical Hurler burlesque show is at the Gayety this week, where the "Girls from Happyland" are disporting themselves in two sprightly burlettas. The most powerful magnifying glass could not detect a plot in the two offerings, but their utter nonsense and agile dancing makes them go over great.

Much of the success of the entertainment is due to the undying efforts of Tom Senna, a comedian new to Washington audiences, but one who has quickly established his right to rank with the best of them. His dance numbers with Miss Webber were repeatedly encored.

While a little shy on vocal ability the feminine members of the company are good lookers, and every one of them can shake a wicked knee. Violet and Tenny Hilton won the chief honors, while Vivian Lawrence and Dolly Meden came in for a good share of the applause.

Other members of the company include Jimmie Conners and Thomas McKenna, whose "sidewalk patter" bearing on prohibition was extremely funny; Al Watson and Bert Lester.

The "four dancing demons," a colored troupe, introduced many novel steps. The chorus is good looking and well drilled.

COMEDY PREDOMINATES ON B. F. KEITH'S BILL

Pearl Regay Foremost Star of a Program of Stars.

From the first act on the bill at Keith's this week until the last there is not a dull moment. Comedy is the predominant feature of the program, with enough music to balance any vaudeville entertainment. Like every week's vaudeville there was a headliner, but to find out who it was one had to look for the name on the electric sign in front of the house. From the audience point of view there were about six star acts.

Probably Pearl Regay was the foremost star, because she was on the stage longer than any other act and she received the most applause. Assisted by Roy Sheldon and a jazz orchestra of five she sang and danced and did acrobatic stunts. Her dancing was graceful and her costumes fetching.

Homer B. Mason and Marguerite Keeler presented a farce that had unexpected situations almost every minute and kept the audience in good humor. Ed Gallagher and Joe Rolley, presented a comedy skit that served to exploit good negro comedy and music.

Hostock's Riding School showed how circus riding is done and the audience was asked to qualify as bareback riders. Some of them tried much to the amusement of the others. Colin O'More sang several Irish airs.

Pressler and Klais presented a novelty comedy and music act. Bernard and Gary syncopated several songs, and Ralph Lohse and Nana Sterling took chances at breaking their necks on a trapeze.

Topics of the day and kinograms completed the excellent bill.

Diving Contests at Y. W. C. A.
The seventh anniversary of the Y. W. C. A. Red Cross Life Savings Corps will be celebrated tonight at 8 o'clock at the association's branch, 614 E street northwest. Swimming and diving contests will be held in addition to prize life-saving tests.

"WAY DOWN EAST" GREAT CLASSIC OF THE SCREEN

David Wark Griffith Achieves Triumph With Old Play.

D. W. Griffith personally presented "Way Down East," the cinema version of Lottie Blair Parker's stage play of that name, at Foll's Theater last night, before a tremendously enthusiastic audience.

THE CAST
Anna Moore Lillian Gish
Her Mother Mrs. David Landau
Mrs. Tremont Mrs. Morgan Belmont
Her Sister Patricia Fren
The Eccentric Aunt Florence Short
Lennox Sanderson Lowell Sherman
Squire Bartlett Burr McIntosh
David Bartlett Richard Barthelmess
Martha Bartlett Kate Ogden
Seth Holcomb Porter Strong
Reuben Whipple George Neville
H. Heller Edgar Nelson
Kate Brewster Mary Hay
Professor Sterling Creighton Hale
Maria Poole Emily Fitzroy

This play, known to millions of people, is the story of a girl's betrayal by her lover, her shame and privations, and eventual rise to a sea of troubles to happiness as the wife of a true man. Given these rude emotional forces, David Wark Griffith, artist and alchemist, has presented a screen portrayal that is no less than the Puritan epic.

We who today witness the first steps of an infant art are too close to Griffith to view him in his proper perspective. One hundred years from now, when the cinema has reached heaven knows what heights, posterity will look upon David Wark Griffith as the early master of a great art. We like to fancy that students will analyze "Way Down East," much as men of erudition today expound the folios and quartos of Elizabethan drama.

It would be fascinating to conjecture what their verdict will be. We can picture some professor, his spectacles gleaming with literary rapture, saying to his classes:

"Young gentlemen, detrimental though it may be to the host of cinema producers of the Twenty-first Century, I must admit that no one has reached greater heights than David Wark Griffith, the earliest master. Notwithstanding our marvelous improvements in photography and projection, none has known so well as he the proper balance of rest and action. None has known the art of compelling the human emotions to respond to the images and illusions of the screen as he has.

"We will now proceed to the dark room, where we shall view his 'Way Down East,' filmed 100 years ago. Please note that for rudimentary force and compelling illusions, it has never been bettered."

We think that one of the dearest compliments that can be paid Griffith is the fact that he uses Miss Lillian Gish as the center of his greatest play. She hasn't, possibly, a single external asset that carries her above a fair standard of excellence. Lillian Gish would never carry away honors in a "screen contest," and dressed for every day she would hardly earn a second look from a casual stranger. Every atom of her force is drawn from within. Every gesture is spiritual, every spell she casts is one from the innermost sources. Her hands can be as potent and appealing as her eyes. Her walk is the despair of rivals. Miss Gish is incomparable. She is the embodiment of art.

We often wonder whether Gish made Griffith or Griffith made Gish. Perhaps the two are correlated in

development. Certainly the producer couldn't score as he does without her instinctive interpretations of his mood.

Griffith shows his mastery and penetration in his scenes of nature. He knows that nature never errs, never defaults, never becomes in-

(Continued on Page Twenty-one.)

SIDNEY LUST'S SHOPPERS' REST. LEADER THEATER
NINTH ST. BELOW F. Continued—10 A. M. to 11 P. M. ALL THIS WEEK.
HENRY R. WALTHALL in "THE CONFESSION"
COMING—DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS in "The Mark of Zorro."

SHUBERT-BELASCO TONIGHT
THE SIDDONS OF TODAY
NANCE O'NEIL
IN "THE PASSION FLOWER."
An Artist—A Play—A Company Unequaled in Recent Memory.
WEEK FEB. 14. MAIL ORDERS NOW RICHARD WALTON FULLY

GUY BATES POST
"The Masquerader"

Original cast and production intact, including massive double revolving stages, complete mechanical crew, triple electrical equipment, requires three casts to transport.

How to Order Tickets by Mail.
Send cheque or postoffice money order to theater for the amount of ticket purchase. PLUS war tax of 10 per cent. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Mail orders filled in order received. Yes, thus avoid waiting in line at the ticket window.

Orchestra, \$2.50 and \$3; balcony, \$1.50 and \$2; gallery, \$1. Wednesday Mat. Orchestra, \$1.50 and \$2; balcony, \$1.50 and \$1 gallery, 50c.
Next Monday, Seats Thur. Messrs. Shubert Present A New Musical Comedy, **COGNAC** WITH OLIVE TELL. And a great company including TOM POWERS.

Now Playing—"The Killers"
The Bad Men of the West
CRITERION THEATER, 9th & D.N.W.

THE STEALERS ARE COMING

NATIONAL TONIGHT, 8:20
WM. HARRIS, JR., Presents JOHN DORRICKWATER, **ABRAHAM LINCOLN** WITH FRANK McGLYNN And the Original V. V. Company.
Starting Next Sunday—Seats Thursday.
The George W. Lederer Producing Co. Presents **VICTOR HERBERT'S Musical Comedy**
The Girl in the Spotlight

FEATURING **HAL SKELLY and MARY MILBURN** WITH AN ALL-STAR CAST AND A BRIGADE OF FEMININE LOVELINESS

WATCH YOUR HUSBAND WATCH YOUR SWEETHEART OR YOU'LL FIND HIM UP IN MARY'S ATTIC

\$200 Gold FORTY PRIZES \$5 Each
For the Best 200-word Story Written on the Following SYNOPSIS OF "THE SAGE HEN"

They called her a "Sage Hen," a name given to women in the Old West, and stoned her and her baby out of town. Forced to part with her son to save his life and not finding him again, she gave her great mother love to an orphaned baby girl. Later, with a clean reputation, her son and two men crossed her path. Her one thought was to shield the girl and her son, who loved each other, from the knowledge of her past. Her great love permitted her to be tortured almost beyond endurance, but the mystery finally cleared and mother love triumphed.
Send Stories to Mr. Broyle at the Theater, Today, Tomorrow or Thursday.
THE ONE BEST STORY WILL BE PUBLISHED CRITERION THEATER, 9th & D.N.W. BEGINNING FEBRUARY 5th.

THE STEALERS ARE COMING

TUESDAY POLI'S 4:30 SIR PHILIP GIBBS
ON "What America Means to the World"
Tickets: \$2.00, \$1.50, \$1.00, 50c. Office T. Arthur Smith, 1306 G St.

THE STEALERS ARE COMING

GAYETY—9th Below F
All This Week—Matinee Daily.
Girls From Happyland
And an All-Star Cast.
NEXT WEEK—"Jingle Jingle."

B.F. KEITH'S 25c & Up
DAILY 8:15 SUN. 3:00 HOLY'S 2:00, 5:00 8:15
Senta, 25 Cents Daily. Mat. 10:00. Except Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays.
Pearl Regay, Homer B. Mason Assisted by Roy Sheldon, Keeler & Co. in "Oh, Colin O'More, Gallagher & Rolley, Hostock's Riding School, Pressler & Klais, Bernard & Gary, Lohse Sterling, "Topics of the Day," Kinograms, Other Hits.

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No Telephone Orders Taken During This Engagement

Owing to the cost, length of production and irrevocable contracts, "WAY DOWN EAST" will never be shown at less than first-class theater prices.

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11 a. m.—ALL WEEK—11 p. m.
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PRISCILLA DEAN
AND
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OUTSIDE THE LAW
A MELODRAMATIC SENSATION
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Popular Prices, 25c, 30c, 35c.
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AN
ARSENE LUPIN STORY
WITH
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Continuous, 10:30 a. m.—11 p. m.
TODAY AND ALL WEEK
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Comedy—"Pretty Lady!"
Pathe News—Topics
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Continuous, 10:30 A.M.—11 P.M.
NOW PLAYING
Paramount Presents
"THE INSIDE OF THE CUP"
By WINSTON CHURCHILL
Directed by Albert Capellani
With a Brilliant Cast

GRANDALL'S F at 10th
METROPOLITAN
THIS WEEK
10:30 A. M. to 11 P. M.
CHARLES RAY
In Sol Smith Russell's Hit.
PEACEFUL VALLEY
Distinctive Added Attractions.

GRANDALL'S 18th and Col. Rd.
KNICKERBOCKER
TODAY
Beginning at 6:30 P. M.
STAR CAST
In Allan Dwan's, The
FORBIDDEN THING
MANY ADDITIONAL HITS

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SOKOLOFF, Conductor
National Theater Tuesday
February 8, 4:30
Soloist Mischel Piastro Violinist
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Mme. HOMER and MISS LOUISE HOMER
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Seats now on sale at Mrs. Greene's Concert Bureau, Droop's, 13th & G. Phone M. 6493.

FRIDAY, NATIONAL, 4:30
Ten-Star concert.
BIRGIT ENGELL
The Celebrated Danish Soprano
and
LAURENCE LEONARD
English Baritone.
Tickets, \$2.00, \$1.50, \$1.00, T. Arthur Smith, 1306 G St.

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